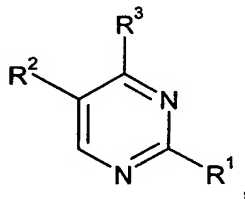


ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

This invention is directed to sorbitol dehydrogenase inhibitory compounds of the formula I,



I

wherein R¹, R² and R³ are as defined in the specification. This invention is also directed to pharmaceutical compositions containing those compounds and methods of treating or preventing diabetic complications, particularly diabetic neuropathy, diabetic nephropathy, diabetic microangiopathy, diabetic macroangiopathy and diabetic cardiomyopathy by administering such compounds to a mammal suffering from diabetes and therefore at risk for developing such complications. This invention is also directed to pharmaceutical compositions comprising a combination of a compound of formula I of this invention with an aldose reductase inhibitor and to methods of treating or preventing diabetic complications therewith. This invention is also directed to pharmaceutical compositions comprising a combination of a compound of formula I of this invention with an NHE-1 inhibitor and to methods of treating cardiomyopathy and other heart-related problems therewith. This invention is also directed to certain intermediates used in the synthesis of the compounds of formula I and to processes for preparing those intermediates.